



William C. Velásquez Institute

July 1, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: MB Docket No. 04-207

Dear Commissioners:

The William C. Velazquez Institute is a non-partisan organization founded two decades ago to conduct useful research to improve the level of political participation in Latino communities in the United States. In two decades we have launched many battles to make sure our opinions and issues are part of our national agenda. We have worked hard to make sure whenever there is an issue that will affect us, we have the information to educate our community to assert themselves into any debate. That is why we have been following closely the issue of *a la carte* pricing for cable television, which would most certainly reduce, rather than expand, the diversity of programming on cable television.

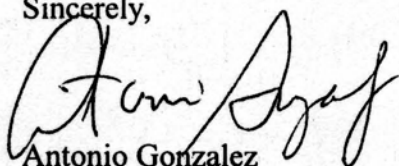
As the Commission noted when it opened the above-referenced docket, an *a la carte* pricing scheme could have unintended negative consequences for cable programming diversity. Despite the growing number of cable networks and programs embracing Latino characters and issues, positive, realistic images remain rare exceptions to the rule. Clearly there is a need for more – not less – programming aimed at Latinos as well as an environment in which struggling networks that provide quality programming can find a voice.

The *a la carte* setting can wipe out the little there is of our faces in cable programming. Advertisers will spend fewer dollars on *niche* networks when there is a decline in viewership, which is precisely what will occur if viewers chose only a small handful of the most popular channels. Once advertisers reign in their spending, smaller networks will not survive, stripping the cable medium of valuable minority voices.

We know this debate is just starting. We will do what we do best: measure the opinions of our community on this issue as well inform them of the consequences if implemented. I hope the Commission will consider my comments and protect the

growing diversity of voices on television. In doing so, you will also protect the entrepreneurial spirit that thrives on cable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Antonio Gonzalez', written in a cursive style.

Antonio Gonzalez
President
WCVI